

Message Text

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11/64

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 SCS-03 IO-14 SR-02 ORM-03 PM-07

SS-20 NSC-07 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 HEW-08

PA-04 PRS-01 SCA-01 USIE-00 SWF-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 DRC-01 /126 W

----- 065016

O R 300054Z SEP 74 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8181

INFO USUN NEW YORK 585

JCS

DIA

AMCONSUL BELIZE

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO IMOEDIATE

COMUSARSO IMMEDIATE

COMUSAFSO IMMEDIATE

COMUSNAVSO IMMEDIATE

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

STATE PASS AID/FHA/FDRC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, HO

SUBJECT: HURRICANE FIFI - AMBASSADOR SANCHEZ' OBSOAVATIONS

1. AMBASSADOR, DCM, DRHERTOR OF AID, PAO, DAO, AND OTHER
MISSION OFFICIALS MET PRESIDENTIAL EMISSARIES HERMAN KLEINE AND
RUSSELL MCCLURE ON ARRIVAL IN TEGUCIGALPA ON SUNDAY MORNING.
FOREIGN MINISTRY CHIEF OF PROTOCOL AND DEPUTY MINISTER OF
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PUBLIC HEALTH ALSO PRESENT. EMISSARIES TAKEN TO VIP ROOM OF

AIRPORT FOR PHOTOGRAPHS AND INITIAL BRIEFING.

2. AMBASSADOR THEN LEFT FOR NORTH COAST ON DAO PLANE. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY BRIGADIER RODOLPH LANIER OF THE SALVATION ARMY WHO IS HEAD OF THEIR MEDICAL TEAMS IN THE DISASTER AREA. DR. ALFRED MARKUEZ FROM THE SAN FRANCISCO AREA, WHO HAS VOLUNTEERED TO SERVE WITH THE MEDICAL TEAMS, ALSO ACCOMPANIED THE AMBASSADOR.

3. AMBASSADOR RECEIVED UP TO DATE BRIEFING AT OPERATIONS CENTER AT LA MESA AIRFIELD FROM MILGP COMMANDER, U.S. HELICOPTER DISPATCHER AND OFFICER IN CHARGE OF BRITISH OPERATIONS. HE WAS TOLD THAT ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION POINT BEING ESTABLISHED AT GUANACASTAL IN LOWER SULA VALLEY. ALSO INFORMED THAT ROAD LA MESA AIRPORT - PROGRESO - GUANACASTAL IN OPERATION. THE GUANACASTAL POINT WILL SERVE AS A BASE FOR HELICOPTER DISTRIBUTION TO AREAS STILL UNDER WATER IN LOWER SULA VALLEY.

4. AMBASSADOR INFORMED THAT MANY BRIDGES REPAIRED IN AREA OF SAN PEDRO SULA - PUERTO CORTES - TELA - LA CEIBA. THIS DEVELOPMENT COMBINED WITH FORDING CAPABILITY STARTING TO PROVIDE FOR VEHICULAR DELIVERY OF SUPPLIES. AT PRESENT TIME ALL SUPPLIES BEING LANDED IN HONDURAS CAPABLE OF BEING DISTRIBUTED INLAND BY EXISTING TRANSPORT CAPABILITIES. THE HONDURAN AIR FORCE HAS BEEN DOING EXCELLENT JOB. BRITISH HELICOPTERS DOING GOOD JOB EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE LIMITED LIFT CAPABILITY. ONE U.S. HELICOPTER BEING REPAIRED.

5. BOTH U.S. MILGP COMMANDER AND BRITISH COMMANDER BELIEVE THAT "AREA IS BEING ADEQUATELY COVERED." HOWEVER, THE AMBASSADOR HAS ASKED FOR A CHECK AND REPORT ON ISOLATED AREAS NOT YET REACHED IN LEAN VALLEY. THE VALLEY IS LOCATED BETWEEN THE LOWER SULA VALLEY AND TELA.

6. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO VISITED CAMPO AGAS, THE REFUGEE CENTER, LOCATED AT THE FAIRGROUNDS OUTSIDE SAN PEDRO SULA. HE BELIEVES THE CENTER IS STRAINING TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE HELP FOR THE 5,000 - 6,000 REFUGEES PRESENTLY IN THE CAMP, MAY

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FROM THE CHOLOMA AREA NORTH OF SAN PEDRO SULA. THE AMBABASSADOR STATES THAT THE BASIC SANITATION IN THE CENTER IS DISASTROUS. HE SAID THAT AREA LITTERED WITH GARBAGE, FECAL MATTER AND TRASH AND CONDITIONS MADE WORSE BY HEAT AND HUMIDITY. THE FEW SANITARY UNITS IN POSITION ARE INSUFFICIENT IN NUMBER AND THOSE AVAILABLE ARE NOT BEING USED TO FULL CAPACITY.

7. AMBASSADOR STATED THAT ALL REFUGEES HE HAD TALKED TO

DURING 2 HOUR PERIOD HAD TOLD HIM THEY HAD NOT HAD CHANGE OF CLOTHES SINCE RESCUE. HE ALSO SAID THAT MANY REFUGEES HAD SORES AND WOUNDS CAUSED BY LANDSLIDES OR BEING CARRIED AWAY BY FLASH FLOODS. HOWEVER, EVERYONE QUESTIONED HAS SAID THAT THEY HAD BEEN SEEN AT LEAST ONCE BY MEDICAL PERSONNEL AT CENTER. THE AMBASSADOR OBSERVED THAT MEDICAL PERSONNEL AT CAMP SEEMED TO BE COPING WITH SITUATION EVEN THOUGH ADDITIONAL HELP IS NEEDED. MANY INDIVIDUALS APPEAR TO BE IN SHOCK AND DIARRHEA AND OTHER SICKNESSES ARE EVIDENT. AMBASSADOR STATED THAT MEDICAL PERSONNEL SAID THEY NEEDED ADDITIONAL BASIC MEDICAL SUPPLIES.

8. AMBASSADOR SAID THAT COOKING FACILITIES ARE PRIMITIVE BUT ADEQUATE. HE OBSERVED THAT FOOD SUPPLIES SEEMED TO BE SUFFICIENT EVEN THOUGH PEOPLE TO SERVE FOOD NOT AVAILABLE IN SUFFICIENT NUMBERS. HE SAID THERE IS APPARENTLY ADEQUATE RESERVES OF ORANGES, POTATOES, YUCA AND GRAINS.

9. IN CONVERSATION WITH HONDURAN AND U.S. VOLUNTEERS AMBASSADOR WAS INFORMED THAT BASIC NEEDS ARE WATER, BASIC MEDICINES AND CLOTHING. THE AMBASSADOR HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK WITH COLONEL HERNANDEZ AND COLONEL GARCIA ON RELIEF SITUATION. HE SAID THAT U.S. WOULD ATTEMPT TO SUPPLY IMMEDIATELY DRUMS FOR WATER TRANSPORT AND TO ACCELERATE TRANSFER OF BASIC MEDICINES, BABY FOOD AND CLOTHING.

10 ON LEAVING CAMP AMBASSADOR OBSERVED CROWD OF APPROXIMATELY 400 PEOPLE SHOVING AT GATE IN ATTEMPT TO BE LET IN CAMP. HONDURAN OFFICER IN CHARGE SAID THAT THEY WERE POOR PEOPLE FROM SAN PEDRO SULA WHO WANTED FOOD BUT WHO HAD NOT BEEN AFFECTED BY HURRICANE. CROWD BEING INCREASINGLY UNRULY WITH PASSAGE OF TIME.

SANCHEZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TEGUCI04136
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740275-0091
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974091/aaaaaapz.tel
Line Count: 154
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <06 MAR 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HURRICANE FIFI - AMBASSADOR SANCHEZ' OBSOVIATIONS
TAGS: OGEN, HO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005